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JOHN T. STUART
at the
OLD SETTLERS
REUNION
SEPTEMBER 4, 1877

SPRINGFIELD
CENTENNIAL
EDITION

(1937)

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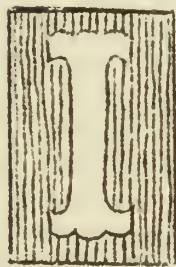
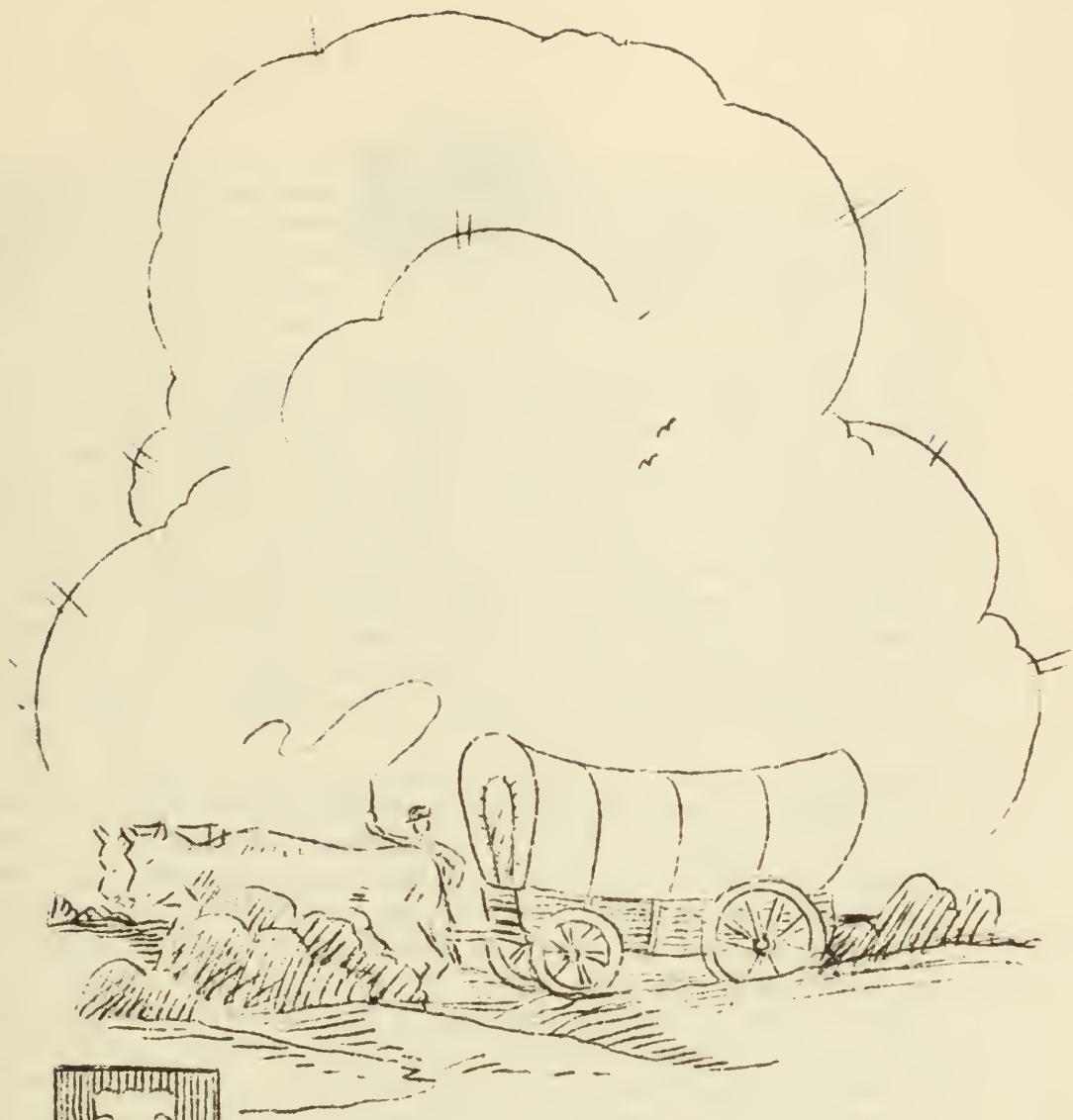
Springfield, Illinois

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F O R E W O R D

The old settlers reunion in the year 1877 was held at Sulphur Springs, near Loami. The gathering was honored by the presence of John C. Power and John T. Stuart. Mr Power made a few remarks and Mr. Stuart gave the address of the day.

Nothing could be more desireable as a picture of Springfield a century ago than the following extracts of that speech in which Mr. Stuart tells of his arrival in the straggling little village on the "Town Branch". He draws a map of the town of that early day and places on it, one by one, all the landmarks, dwellings and business places, and closes with a list of business men and representative early settlers.



In the fall of the year 1828, in the midst of the soft and mellow Indian summer, the speaker left his native county of Fayette Ky., emigrating to Springfield, Illinois, and traveling on horseback, in two days arrived at Louisville, and crossing the Ohio river struck the great highway to the west, running from Louisville to Vincennes and St. Louis, and at Maysville, Ill., branching to central Illinois, known then as the Sangamon Country. Having entered this great road, he was united to that mighty stream of emigrants

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moving westward, whose mission was to subdue the wilderness, to found states, to carry forward the banner of civilization.....

That moving mass was composed of every specimen of humanity, men, women, children, black and white, old and young, some highly cultivated and refined, others at the very lowest round of the ladder of intellect and cultivation, and of every intermediate grade. There was the man of middle age, who had filled a high social position in his native state, accompanied by a family cultivated and refined, on the way to the west to retrieve his fallen fortunes. There were young girls, then obscure, unknown and poorly clad, but destined to fill princely mansions, and to become mothers of a race of fair daughters and gallant sons.

On the 28th day of October, 1828 he entered Springfield by First to Jefferson street. At the crossing of First and Jefferson, looking west, on the margin of the timber and Town Branch, stood the old horse mill of John Taylor, then abandoned, and the tan yard of Wm. Proctor now living at Lewiston. Both of these buildings were on the north of Jefferson street, and intermediate between them and First street was a corn field. On the south side of Jefferson and west of First street stood the houses of John Sherrill, a shoemaker, and John Moor, who had married Mrs. Hawley, the estimable mother of E. B. Hawley and Isaac Hawley; and west of Moor were the cabins of Uncle Billy Fagan and of Wm. Baker. Going thence east on Jefferson street first stood the hotel of Mr. Abrams on the south side, and adjoining was the dwelling and store of John Taylor, next the Buck Tavern kept by Andrew Elliot; next the grocery and adjoining dwelling of Wm. Carpenter. On the opposite side of Jefferson was first what was once the old tavern, but then the dwelling of Col. Cox and family; next east were five or six small two-room frame buildings, with ends to the street; the first occupied by Jesse Cormak in the front room as a tinner's shop, while Asa S. Shaw occupied the rear room as a Justice's office; next was the store house



of Mordecai Mobley; next the grocery of Ebenezer Capps and the two next on the corner were occupied as the store of Gen. James D. Henry with Phil C. Latham as clerk. Following east on Jefferson and across Second street at the corner, on the right, stood the store where Elijah Iles sold goods and John Williams performed well the duties of clerk; the family of Major Iles resided in the same house. Next was a two story log house, in the lower room of which, Jabez Capps had a shoemakers shop, the upper room being the residence of his family. Opposite, on the north side of Jefferson, and on its corner with Second street stood a small log house, occupied as a store and dwelling by Archer G. Horndon; next east was a two-room frame house with end to the street, the front room occupied by Hooper Warren as a printing office, and the rear room as the dwelling of his family; next, and on an eighty-foot lot, stood a two-story house, with two rooms below, with a hall between, occupied as a residence by Pascal P. Enos and his family, except the east lower room, which was used as a land office. Continuing east on Jefferson and crossing third, and as you looked south on third, not far from the south end of the C. and A. Depot, stood another two-room frame building with end to Third street, occupied by a carpenter named Fowler as a residence; next was Levi Goodin in a cabin on the south side of Jefferson, while on the corner of Fourth and Jefferson, on the south side, stood the residence of Gen. James Adams. On the north side of Jefferson, between Third and Fourth streets, stood a double log building, the residence of Gordon Abrams. Next on the corner of Fourth and Jefferson, stood the residence and shop of Dr. Jayne. This house still stands, and is occupied by Mr. Baum as a stone and marble establishment. Still going east on Jefferson and crossing Fourth street, to the right on the eighty-foot lot on which the St. Nicholas Hotel now stands, was a two story log house, the residence of Charles Boyd, a tailor. On the north side of Jefferson and opposite to Boyd was the residence of Thomas Strawbridge, and his sister, Mrs. Anderson. Jacob Plank resided in a two room frame house on the corner of Sixth and Jefferson; and crossing Sixth street, on the corner lot of Jefferson and Fifth

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streets stood the blacksmith shop of John White and his residence adjoining. On the opposite side was the cabin of the Tuckers, and these were the last houses on east Jefferson. Crossing to Washington street and beginning again on First street, and moving east between first and Second on the block south, and on the site of the present residence of Major Crendorff stood a two story frame house, the best in the village, the then residence of Dr. John Todd. This was afterwards removed and still stands nearly opposite, across the street. Going still east on Washington, near the corner of Washington and Third and near the present site of the flouring mill, stood a log cabin, the residence of Polly, a colored woman and her family. Still east on the corner of Washington and Fourth, stood a double frame house then occupied as a residence by Joe Thomas, afterwards purchased by and made the residence of Dr. John C. Bergen, while on the same block, and near the corner of Washington and Fifth stood the residence of Asa G. Shaw. On the opposite block and on the corner where now stands the Chenery House stood the cabin of a colored woman called familiary, Aunt Creecy, and these were the only houses on Washington Street. There were but two houses on Adams street, the blacksmith shop of Aleck Humphreys and his residence adjoining, situated on the corner of Adams and Third (on the north side opposite to the Episcopal church) and the residence of Dr. Garret Elkin, on the two lots on the south side of Adams where it corners with Sixth street, now occupied by the magnificent stores of C.M. Smith and others—the very center of business now. Washington Iles lived in a two room frame house on the corner of Monroe and Fourth street, the present site of the Second Presbyterian church. Rivers McCormack, a Methodist circuit rider, had built and lived in a cabin on Monroe, on part of the Tindale hill, but he had ceased to occupy it. Fronting the public square, on the corner of Sixth and Adams stood a two-story frame building, the lower rooms of which were used as a court room, while the upper was used by Charles R. Matheny as a clerks office. Fronting the public square on the west and on the lot now occupied by Joel Brown as a book and drug store, stood an-



other two room frame house, with end to the street, then occupied by Dr. Darling as a family residence. On the east side of the public square was the whipping post. I saw two men punished at the whipping post; the last was named Watson, who was sentenced to receive eighty lashes for attempt to rob Mr. Bouge. Gen. Henry the sheriff inflicted the punishment, and it was doubted by those who saw it whether Henry or Watson suffered most. Henry was very pale, and I hope never to see another such sight. I believe I have enumerated all the buildings in the village of Springfield; all north of Jefferson, all east of Sixth and south of Adams streets (except as above mentioned) was unbroken prairie, except that Charles R. Matheny and family lived on the corner of Sixth and Cook streets--now the residence of Mrs. Irwin--and there cultivated about forty acres; and Ed. Mitchell resided with his family northeast of the public square on a small farm, which was afterward laid out into Mitchell's Addition. The town of Springfield then had not exceeding 500 inhabitants, and they were from every section and state in the Union, generally young people except where the father or grandfather had come out with some younger branch of his family. They were as a rule poor and had moved west to better their fortunes. It required some nerve and courage then, to emigrate to the west, and therefore, they were generally energetic and enterprising.

Grouping the business men of that day, the lawyers were Gen. James Adams, Gen. Thomas H. Neal, Col. James Strade, Thomas Moffall and Jonathan H. Pugh, men of mark then, but now all dead and forgotten, overshadowed by that brilliant galaxy of lawyers, their successors, which adorned the Sangamon bar between the years 1830 and 1840. The physicians were Dr. John Todd, Dr. Gershem Jayne, Dr. Garrett Elkin and Dr. Ephram Darling. They were good Physicians in any country were men of intelligence, estimable in all their social relations, and besides, they were men of splendid physique and able to endure the arduous labor of the practice of the day which required them to ride night and day on horseback or in the sulky, for fifty miles around. The merchants were Elijah Iles, Gen. Henry, Mordecai Mobley, John Taylor, Archer G. Herndon, while Ebenezer Capp kept the grocery.

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They were all good men then, and enjoyed the confidence of the community.

It may be invidious to single out any of these early settlers as all cannot be mentioned here; but as representatives of the whole I would mention the Darneal's, the Wykoffs, the McGwin's, the Morris's, the Kinney's, the Cloyd's of Lick Creek, the Patton's, the Husband's, the Crew's, the Fletcher's, the Drennon's, the Dodds and Isaac Keys of Sugar Creek; the Elkins, the Constant's, the McDaniels, the Pickrell's, and the Dawson's of the north fork; the Casses's the Burn's, the Lawson's and St. Clair's of Buffalo Hart; the Cantrall's, the Councils, the Power's of Fancy Creek; the Irwins, the Cartwright's, the Carson's, the Purviance's, the Andersons and the Harrison's of Richland; the Sim's, the McCoys, the Morgan's and the Earnest's of Spring Creek; the Beckenridge's, the Baker's, the Neal's, the Stafford's, and Sattly's of Fork Prairie; Samuel Williams, the Fouch's the Ellis's, the Yates's, the Wilcox's of Island Grove; the Iles's, C.R.Matheny, Drs. Todd, Jayne and Elkin, P.P. Enos, J. Taylor, A. G. Herndon, P. C. Latham, J. Williams, Gen. Henry, J. P. Pugh and P. VanBergen of Springfield,

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SPEECH OF JOHN T. STUART, SEPTEMBER 4TH,



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